

## STRAY THOUGHTS ON THIS AND THAT

The Critics Begin Harvesting the Year's Toll—Mr. Leonard Hall Turns Kalsomner. Random Notes on Small Topics.

WITH the new year aborning and the old one shrinking from the hook which Father Time is lugging through life's off-stage wings, now is the time when some good play critics and true dash madly down to the file room fifteen minutes before press time to compile the annual list of the ten best plays and the thousand and ten worst ones. There will be anointing with holy oils and burning of incense by a few, a vigorous laying-on of the bastinado with saltine applications by others, while the great bulk will content themselves—if not their readers—by a neutral aloofness from critical appraisal. These latter will pursue the negative and safer course by constructing Woolworth buildings and Lincoln highways from all the year's bad manuscripts, "if laid end to end;" or, patterning an scalloped centerpiece for the White House dinner table from the good manuscripts "if laid end to end."

I am not deeply taken with this business of hitting a play behind its back. In the first place the key to the file-room is lost. Then, again, this is not so much the season for retrospect as it is one of concern for the future. Also good will abounds in plenty though the Yule log is but a cinderous memory. Thus, and for many more reasons, I will not undertake to list the good plays and the bad which the Capital has seen this past year, principally, because the play season is a fiscal one, ending in May and whoever heard of a play reviewer east of Pittsburgh surveying the season before it was half over?

Which are as good reasons as any adduced by Joe Cook for not imitating four Hawaiians.

IN any estimate of the stage and its products, furthermore, this department could never be disposed to the charity of Leonard Hall, of the Daily News, whose estimable review last week of the Ram's Head Players' premiere, I am sure, will not be excelled when the premiere is definitely given January 5. Mr. Hall flattened his new dictionary into limp subjection over the incursion of chamber drama in this Sahara of higher urges and then the incursion was postponed for tactical reasons but too late for the Naughty Boy to wrap a tourniquet on the verbal flow.

IDEAS for discursive talk are very scarce this last, but one, day of the old year. • • • Our old friend, Ada Meade, has been given the starring part in a new musical comedy, "Elsie," which opened in Dayton, Ohio, last week, and is playing Indianapolis this week. • • • A few more theaters from Harry Crandall and this department will yell for assistance. • • • Three openings tonight, two of them brand new and all the subsidiary reviewers begging off the lustier-lunged wake on Pennsylvania avenue. What will Sam Steinberger do? • • • Leo Leavitt, the new and genial manager of Poli's, was in to say hello the past week. • • • Andrew Kelley, wild-cat publicity man for the Belasco, is a tame pussy this week by reason of a toothache. • • • Terrence Duffy, of the President Players, is "agin" the word "stock" to designate his repertoire company. Only one out of ten can pronounce repertoire and by whatever name it seems the whole city is intent on seeing "Abie's Irish Rose." • • • Hilary promised at the Gayety's midnight performance tonight. Ditto the Belasco. • • • Next week, George White's "Scandals," Sessue Hayakawa, the screen star, in a personal appearance in "Tiger Lily;" Bertha Kalich in "Jitta's Atonement." • • • Trusting this will fill out the column—

HAROLD PHILLIPS.

### Special Rialto Music.

A concert offering of unusual appeal is announced at Moore's Rialto Theater for the week beginning today as one of the outstanding features of the special New Year bill. The appearance is that of Prospero Miraglia, harp soloist of the Rialto Orchestra, who will be heard three times daily in a carefully chosen program.

# The Stage



KITTY WATSON  
AT  
THE BELASCO  
TODAY

ENID MARKEY  
IN  
"BARNUM WAS RIGHT"  
NATIONAL  
TOMORROW

MABEL DARRELL  
COSMOS TOMORROW

ETTA PILLARD  
GAYETY  
TODAY

DUNCAN SISTERS  
AT KEITH'S TOMORROW



SOME OF THE "MUSI-GIRLS" IN  
FRANK TINNEY'S REVUE  
AT POLI'S TONIGHT

## Pouf! She Said, But There It Was

A PLACID lake shimmering in the foothills; an old-time death legend; superstitious Indians who regarded the little body of water as the entrance to the happy hunting grounds; Marjorie Daw and a skull—these were the concomitants of a peculiar drama during the filming by Cosmopolitan Productions for Paramount of "The Pride of Palomar," which opens at Loew's Palace this afternoon.

The lake alluded to is on the Rancho Guajome, in San Diego county, and is owned by Senor Cave Courts. One warm evening, after a strenuous day's work, Miss Daw suggested a swim in the lake.

"No, no," said Senor Courts, horrified. "The lake is haunted!" "So much the better," replied Miss Daw laughing. "What is the story?"

"When I was a boy," said the rancher, "my mother used to tell me of a bad Indian who fell into this lake and was drowned. His friends fished for his body but could find no trace of it. So the legend grew that this lake was a direct door to Purgatory, and



C.F. MCAVOY IN  
"REGULAR PAIS"  
STRAND TODAY



SIXTH WEEK OF "ABIE'S IRISH ROSE"  
PRESIDENT TONIGHT.

that the wicked Pablo had gone right through without stopping." Miss Daw, with several women of the company, decided to take a chance and presently they were in the fated water. Being a fine diver, Miss Daw rose to the surface with a round object

in her hands. It was a human skull! "Is this the bad Indian you were telling us about, Senor Courts?" asked Miss Daw, dropping the skull at his feet. "Well, I'll be doggoned!" muttered the astonished rancher.

"There was some truth in the legend, after all."

Work has been started on Mary Miles Minter's next picture, "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine," at the Laskey Studio, Hollywood. Antonio Moreno will have the featured male role, and the direction will be by Charles Maigne.

## Warfield Outlines His Conception of Shylock

By DAVID WARFIELD.

(Who Has Created a Furor in the Theatrical World by His Characterization of "Shylock.")

(Written for Cosmopolitan News Service.)

NEW YORK, Dec. 30.—I have studied the part of Shylock for years. The main point I want to make is this—and on it I base my characterization—Shylock was not venomous and vindictive until his daughter had been stolen from him—and stolen from him by the same old crowd, if I may call them that. All of the abuses that had been heaped upon him culminated in his near insanity at the end of the second act. At all events, I endeavor to show that he was nearly insane at this point. For surely no sane person would run through the streets, as he does at this juncture, and shriek of his bereavement.

In the courtroom he is obsessed with just one notion—he wants the life of Antonio. He is cold, icy, adamant—nothing can move him. And, remember, he has the law on his side—for it was the law, even though the actual execution of a flesh bond was a rare occasion. My point is this: That Shylock had no idea, when he asked for the bond stipulating a pound of flesh, that Antonio would be unable to meet its requirements. Antonio was a rich

man—he had argosies on every sea.

Shylock had no idea, at this time, of ever demanding the fulfillment of the bond—he was driven to that state of mind by subsequent events. And so I show him to be a very human person in the opening scenes and a very weak person—excepting only for a moment in the scene with Antonio. Probably the ancient grudge line should be cited here to prove that Shylock

## THEATERS READY FOR GALA WEEK

Two New Plays, One Musical Comedy, Booked for Operas in Capital's Legitimate Houses Tonight—Extra Performances.

NATIONAL—Tonight at the National Theater a new farce, "Barnum Was Right," will reveal itself.

In "Barnum Was Right" the authors have struck upon a most novel theme; one replete with much opportunity for unusual entertainment, and Director Meehan has made the most of his opportunities.

The cast includes Donald Brian, who for the first time since the days before "The Merry Widow" relinquished his right to be starred; Marion Coakley, who has earned for herself a niche in the theatrical hall of fame by her work in "The Meanest Man in the World," "The Mountain Man" and "Genius and the Crowd;" Will Deming, one of our leading comedians; Enid Markey, who will be remembered favorably for her work in motion pictures and in "Up in Mabel's Room;" and "The Exciters," Spencer Charters, who scored heavily in "The Tavern;" Lilyan Tashman renowned beauty whose success in the legitimate theater is theatrical history, Elwood Bostwick, Susanne Willa, Neil Martin, Robert Adams and George E. Mack.

POLI'S—Beginning this evening, Arthur Hammerstein will present his latest musical comedy, "Daffy Dill," with Frank Tinney as the star and principal entertainer.

"Daffy Dill" is said to represent Mr. Hammerstein's most pretentious production to date. The piece is in two acts and eleven scenes. Julian Mitchell arranged the dancing ensembles and the entire production has been staged under the personal direction of Mr. Hammerstein.

Assisting Mr. Tinney are such well-known musical comedy favorites as Guy Robertson, Marjorie Leach, Jerome Daley, Josephine Stevens, Jay Manners, Mary Howard, Frederick Renoff, Loris Lee, Ben Mulvey, Ethel Kinley, Gerard Gardner, Gladys Nagel, Al Walton and an attractive chorus.

PRESIDENT.—Having shattered every known record for stage popularity in the theater history of Washington, "Abie's Irish Rose," the famous Anne Nichols comedy sensation at the President Theater, is still breaking its own splendid record for length of engagement by opening, tonight at 8:30 o'clock, the sixth consecutive week of its Washington engagement under the direction of Arthur Leslie Smith and Henry Duffy.

Seldom in the American theater has any playwright crowded into three acts of stage action so many irresistible moments of stage comedy that Anne Nichols has packed into the action of "Abie's Irish Rose."

GARRICK—An event of especial notice will be the performance at the Shubert Garrick Theater tonight of Aaron Hoffman's new play, "Give and Take," which is to be presented here by Max Marcin, prior to its metropolitan run. "Give and Take" deals with the question of capital versus labor, but unlike other labor plays is treated from purely a comedy standpoint. Mr. Marcin has selected what would appear to be a very fine company, headed by that delightful comedian, George Sidney. The list of names also contains Sam Mann, Norma Lee, Charles Dow Clark, Robert W. Craig, Douglas Wood and others of equal reputation. The engagement will continue throughout the week.

BELASCO—Fanny and Kitty Watson, with their unit vaudeville attraction, "Stolen Sweets," will provide the New Year program at the Belasco beginning with the matinee this afternoon. A special midnight performance will be given tonight.

The Watson show ranks with the best on the Shubert circuit. Among the vaudeville acts listed in the first portion of the bill are the DeKoch trio, novelty acrobats; Harry Stepper and Harry O'Neal, in an original dancing specialty called "Brazilian Nuts;" The Five Kings of Syncopeation, in "Hits From Jazzland," and the Watson sisters with their special.

(Continued on Page 5.)

was revengeful from the beginning, but such was not the case. It was no more than a colloquialism—a line carelessly tossed off, as any one at all likely to toss off an exaggerated statement that he does not literally mean.

It is in that vein that I have always conceived Shylock and that is why I have been at pains to make him a human person.